

maid," Elaine, who, when he leaves for the tilt, guards his shield in her tower, wondering what the device thereon may mean, and who the knight may be who had won her love in that first meeting, when she

Lifted her eyes and read his lineaments.
The great and guilty love he bare the Queen,
In battle with the love he bare his lord,
Had marr'd his face, and mark'd it ere his time.

Another sinning on such heights with one,
The flower of all the west and all the world,
Had been the sleeker for it; but in him
His mood was often like a fiend, and rose
And drove him into wastes and solitudes
For agony, who was yet a living soul.

Her brother Lavaine rides away with Lancelot, and they leave her standing there, a fair, sweet picture—

Her bright hair blown about the serious
face
Yet rosy-kindled with her brother's kiss.

Then comes Lancelot's wound, Gawain's quest for Lancelot, the rumours which Gawain, "a prince with smiling face and frowning heart," sets afloat about the love of the Maid of Astolat for Sir Lancelot, the Queen's prostration, and Elaine's pitiful little song, "The Song of Love and Death." Lastly comes the scene in the vine-embowered oriel, where the Queen upbraids Lancelot, and destroys the necklace of diamonds, rushing away just as the barge glides by—

The barge

Whereon the lily maid of Astolat
Lay smiling like a star in darkest night,—
"Elaine the fair, Elaine the loveable,
Elaine the lily maid of Astolat,"

With a letter in her hand to Sir Lancelot.

Then came the fine Gawain and wondered
at her,
And Lancelot later came and mused at her,
And last the Queen herself, and pitied her.

Lancelot, comparing Elaine's pure love with the jealous, sinful passion of Guinevere, prays God to send an angel to cast him in

the mere, "not knowing he should die a holy man."

VII.—*The Holy Grail.*

It is said that Joseph of Arimathea, in whose tomb our Saviour lay, introduced Christianity into the neighbourhood of Glastonbury, in England. The Grail was a cup in which was caught the blood of Christ, and so had great miraculous power—a symbol of the presence of divine love in a visible form. The spiritual life having become low, a quest was entered upon to find the Grail, which, because of man's wickedness, had been caught away. During Arthur's absence, the vow was taken to search a twelvemonth and a day, Gawain swearing loudest.

The knights' experiences are all allegorical. Percivale, who has given way to the pleasures of appetite, sees deep lawns and a brook. The fruit denotes love, the woman spinning and the babe represent domestic happiness, the knight in golden armour is worldly life and splendour, but they are but illusions, for, when he fain would grasp them, they turn to ashes. Fame, too, is represented by an empty castle, and proves to be nothing but a voice. He meets Sir Galahad, the Pure-Hearted, who has seen the Grail in the Mass.

Sir Galahad passes into the spiritual city, crossing the swamps of time, spanned by a bridge of a thousand piers, reminding us of a time when men lived to be a great age. Time, however, is as nothing in God's sight, so the piers disappear in flame as he passes.

"The Good Sir Bors'" experiences represent the power of paganism, but a maiden (possibly Faith) sets him free when he sees the Grail. Sir Gawain, weak spiritually, yields to the first temptation. Lancelot's experiences have a background of storm, signifying doubt. He is per-